

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-07 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-08 NRC-05 OES-07 FEAE-00
DODE-00 ERDA-05 SS-15 SP-02 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06
DHA-02 PM-05 /103 W
-----080679 181256Z /53

R 181048Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5951
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAR ES SALAAM 3348

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SF, TZ
SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENTS

1. GOVERNMENT OWNED DAILY NEWS OF AGUST 14 COMMENTED ON REPORTS THAT SOUTH AFRICA ABOUT TO TEST A NUCLEAR WEAPON. EDITORIAL ENTITLED "THE BOMB IS A PAPER TIGER", NOTED SOUTH AFRICA WAS PREVIOUSLY CUSHIONED BY PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES AS BUFFER ZONES. NOW SOUTH AFRICA HAD DECIDED IT NEEDED NUCLEAR STRENGTH TO PRESERVE APARTHEID AND INTIMIDATE NEIGHBORING STATES. FRANCE, FRG, UK AND US WERE ALLIES WHO HAD HELPED SOUTH AFRICA PRODUCE NUCLEAR ARMS. SOUTH AFRICA WAS NOW OPERATING "RESEARCH REACTORS CAPABLE OF PRODUCING SUFFICIENT PLUTONIUM TO MANUFACTURE A NUMBER OF ATOMIC BOMBS". "IT IS ESTIMATED THAT BY THE END OF NEXT YEAR SOUTH AFRICA WILL HAVE SEVERAL ATOMIC BOMBS IN STORE". SOUTH AFRICA'S NUCLEAR CAPACITY WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, DETER THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE. CHAIRMAN MAO CORRECTLY SAID "THE BOMB IS A PAPER TIGER - IN THE HANDS OF ALL REACTIONARIES."

2. A VERY SIMILAR EDITORIAL APPEARED IN THE PARTY WEEKLY OF AUGUST 14.
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3. GENERAL TANGOV REACTION TO POSSIBLE SOUTH AFRICA NUCLEAR CAPACITY APPEARS TO BE THAT THE STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA WILL BE INTERNAL AND SOUTH AFRICA CAN NOT VERY WELL BOMB ITSELF. DURING US VISIT PRESIDENT NYERERE INDICATED NUCLEAR WEAPONS WERE IRRELEVANT TO LIBERATION STRUGGLES, POINTING TO VIETNAM AS AN EXAMPLE.

4. WE ARE AWARE OF NO ADDITIONAL TANGOV REACTION. WE'
HAVE RECEIVED NO INQUIRES.

5. COMMENT: TANGOV PROBABLY HAS CONSIDERED IT
INEVITABLE THAT SOONER OR LATER WESTERN "ALLIES" WOULD PROP
UP SOUTH AFRICA WITH A NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAPACITY. TANGOV
REACTION TO REPORTS THAT SOUTH AFRICA ABOUT TO BECOME A
NUCLEAR POWER HAS BEEN FAIRLY MILD, PROBABLY, AS NOTED
ABOVE, BECAUSE OF A VIEW THAT NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE IRRELEVANT
TO THE CENTRAL ISSUE OF LIBERATING SOUTH AFRICA. IF ANY ANGER
IS TO BE EXPRESSED, HOWEVER, IT MAY FALL ON THE EARS OF
FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER DE GUIRINGAUD DUE HERE ON AN
OFFICIAL VISIT BEGINNING AUGUST 18.
SPAIN

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NUCLEAR TESTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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TAGS: MNUC, SF, TZ
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